

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 01934 251646 Z

47

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8021

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1934

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, MOPS, PU

SUBJ: PORTUGUESE ATTACK PAIGC BASE CAMP

1. SUMMARY: MILITARY COMMAND IN BISSAU REPORTS

MAJOR MILITARY OPERATION IN PORTUGUESE GUINEA- SENEGALESE
BORDER AREA. PORTUGUESE CLAIM LARGE PAIGC BASE CAMP,
WHICH MAY BE LOCATED ON SENEGALESE SIDE OF BORDER,
DESTROYED, 167 INSURGENTS KILLED AND HUGE QUANTITY ARMS
SEIZED. END SUMMARY.

2. MAY 25 LISBON PRESS CARRIED BISSAU MILITARY COMMAND

ANNOUNCEMENT OF LARGE SCALE FIVE- DAY MILITARY OPERATION
BY PORTUGUESE AFRICAN COMMANDOS AGAINST PAIGC BASE AT
CUMBAMORY. PORTUGUESE MAPS SUPPLIED TO BRITISH JOURNALIST
LAST OCTOBER (LISBON A-268 OF DEC. 23, 1972) INDICATE
THIS PAIGC BASE CAMP LOCATED ON SENEGALESE SIDE OF
BORDER AT APPROXIMATELY 12 DEGREES 31' N, 15 DEGREES 32' W. POR-
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PAGE 02 LISBON 01934 251646 Z

TUGUESE INTELLIGENCE SOURCE CLOSE TO DAO, AND IN POSITION TO KNOW, SAYS HE IS FRANKLY UNCLEAR AT THIS POINT EXACT LOCATION OF OPERATION IN RELATION TO BORDER. HE HAS PROMISED FURTHER INFO SOON.

3. PORTUGUESE CLAIM TO HAVE KILLED 167 INSURGENTS (PORTUGUESE ADMIT TO 11 DEAD AND 48 WOUNDED) AND TO HAVE DESTROYED OR CAPTURED VAST CACHE PAIGC ARMS INCLUDING: KALASHNIKOV AUTOMATIC RIFLES (300), DEGTEAREV MG'S (100), 82 MM MORTARS (11), 82 MM MORTAR SHELLS (800), 122 MM ROCKET LAUNCHERS (21), 122 MM ROCKETS (53), LIGHT ARMS AMMUNITION (150,000 ROUNDS), MINES (1,905), GRENADE LAUNCHERS (588). REPORTED HAUL OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT (WHICH WAS LOCATED IN 26 DEPOTS) FAR EXCEEDS, IN ALL CATEGORIES, TOTAL 1972 GOP SEIZURE OF PAIGC ARMS. FOR EXAMPLE, DURING ALL OF LAST YEAR PORTUGUESE CLAIM TO HAVE CAPTURED IN GUINEA ONE 12 MM LAUNCHER, 518 MINES, HANDFUL OF MORTARS. (IF PAST PRACTICE IS FOLLOWED, SMALL ARMS WILL BE GIVEN TO HOME GUARD UNITS.)

4. ACCORDING PRESS, MILITARY SOURCES CLOSE TO BISSAU COMMAND STRESS MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE OF DESTRUCTION OF CUMBAMORY BASE AND FIGHTING QUALITIES OF BLACK PORTUGUESE COMMANDOS IN FACE STRONG PAIGC RESISTANCE IN WHICH "NUMEROUS FOREIGN MERCENARIES" PARTICIPATED.

5. THIS MILITARY OPERATION, IF REPORTED ACCURATELY, REPRESENTS SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT PORTUGUESE "VICTORY" SINCE LATE FALL OF 1971 WHEN PORTUGUESE AMBUSHED LARGE PAIGC FORCE INSIDE PORTUGUESE GUINEA AND CLAIMED TO HAVE KILLED 215 (LISBON A-8 OF JAN. 7, 1972). ONLY MODEST NUMBER OF ARMS WERE SEIZED IN THAT OPERATION.

6. COMMENT: PORTUGUESE ACTION AGAINST BASE CAMP MAY BE LINKED TO RECENT DOWNING OF 5 PAF AIRCRAFT IN PORTUGUESE GUINEA AT LEAST ONE OF WHICH WAS SHOT DOWN IN VICINITY CUMBAMORY. PORTUGUESE GOVERNOR AND MILITARY COMMANDER, GEN. ANTONIO SPINOLA, IS SAID TO HAVE SOUGHT DURING APRIL 17- MAY 5 LISBON VISIT AUTHORITY MAKE STRONG MILITARY RESPONSE TO USE OF AA MISSILES AND BUILD-UP OF OTHER ARMS IN AREAS BORDERING PORTUGUESE GUINEA. IF CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LISBON 01934 251646 Z

BASE CAMP LOCATED IN SENEGAL, AS SOME OBSERVERS HERE BELIEVE, GOP ACTION REPRESENTS DECIDED ESCALATION IN RESPONSE TO PAIGC USE OF SA -7 MISSILES. ON OTHER HAND, IT SEEMS ODD THAT OPERATION-- WHICH PRESUMABLY BEGAN AT LEAST A WEEK AGO-- HAS NOT BEEN PROTESTED IN UN BY SENEGAL.
POST

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